Yesterday’s News
From the pages of the Harvard Alumni Bulletin and Harvard Magazine

1924 In a likely first for Harvard, mother and son Martha Brown Fincke, M.Ed. ’24, and C. Louis Fincke ’24 receive degrees at the same Commencement.

1939 Modern pedagogy is well represented in the Summer School: J.R. Brewster ’25, of the Harvard Film Service, offers for the first time a course in the development of visual education, with special emphasis on audiovisual aids.

1944 After two years on campus training 6,500 “sky pilots” of all faiths for active service with U.S. troops, the Army Chaplain School departs for Fort Devens.

1949 Decanal records reveal that the 50-member football team set a scholastic record during the previous spring semester: placing almost half its men on the Dean’s List. Most of the rest showed up in the C category. A total of 205 courses revealed only one E and nine Ds.

1954 A 16-year-old camp counselor asks President Pusey’s office for help in winning his camp’s College Competition. Rival cabins had received stickers and photographs from Duke and Notre Dame, and stickers and a yearbook from Georgia Tech. Harvard’s stickers, pennants, a copy of The Harvard Book, “miscellaneous Harvard novels and stories,” copies of the Bulletin and the Crimson, and photographs help Cabin H win first prize.

1974 More than 2,000 people, many of them students, gather in Harvard Square on the evening of August 8 to mark Richard Nixon’s announcement that he will resign the next day.

2004 Following the legalization of gay marriage in Massachusetts, professor of comparative religion and Indian studies Diana Eck and University chaplain Dorothy Austin, the heads of Lowell House, take their vows in Memorial Church on July 4.

2009 As the result of “an unfortunate set of circumstances” (as described in an official statement), Fletcher University Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr. is arrested at his home by a Cambridge police officer; ensuing controversies eventually lead to a “beer summit” at the White House.

News Briefs
Faculty-Dean Denouement

During the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) meeting on May 7, President Lawrence S. Bacow was asked his views on the turmoil at Winthrop House, where student protesters had loudly sought the ouster of their faculty deans, Ronald S. Sullivan Jr. (who had decided to represent movie producer Harvey Weinstein in the criminal proceedings concerning his alleged sexual assaults and harassment involving many women) and Stephanie R. Robinson. Bacow said he would respect the “locus of authority” responsible for making such decisions: in this case, the deans of Harvard College and of FAS.

Those authorities made their decision known on May 11, when College dean Rakesh Khurana advised the Winthrop community that the faculty deans “will not be continuing” in that role after their current term ends on June 30, 2019.

Having previously initiated a review of the “climate” within the House—a review Sullivan was quoted as calling racially biased (see “Coming to Terms

Ronald S. Sullivan

Illustration by Mark Steele
with Sexual Harassment,” May-June, page 22)—Khurana wrote that his decision to end the faculty deans’ service “was informed by a number of considerations. Over the last few weeks, students and staff have continued to communicate concerns about the climate in Winthrop House to the College. The concerns expressed have been serious and numerous. The actions that have been taken to improve the climate have been ineffective, and the noticeable lack of faculty dean presence during critical moments has further deteriorated the climate in the House. I have concluded that the situation in the House is untenable.”

The decision was difficult, he continued, because “I have long admired your faculty deans’ commitment to justice and civic engagement, as well as the good work they have done in support of diversity in their House community. I know that some of you are also proud of these efforts. I also know that some of you have been greatly helped and supported by your faculty deans in difficult situations. This decision in no way lessens my gratitude to them for their contributions to the College.”

Khurana and FAS dean Claudine Gay then met with students in the Winthrop dining hall at midday to discuss the decision, answer questions, and point toward House leadership during the forthcoming period of transition.

Separately, the day before, Sullivan advised the court that he was stepping down as Weinstein’s counsel, because the trial date, rescheduled for September, conflicts...

**University People**

**National Academicians**
In a year in which 40 percent of its newly elected members were women, a new high, the National Academy of Sciences announced 100 new members, including nine Harvard professors: Joanna Aizenberg, Berylyson professor of materials science and professor of chemistry and chemical biology; Cynthia M. Friend, Richards professor of chemistry and professor of materials science; Daniel Kahne, Higgins professor of chemistry and chemical biology and of molecular and cellular biology; David I. Laibson, Goldman professor of economics; Matthew Rabin, Pershing Square professor of behavioral economics; Bernardo L. Sabatini, Moorhead professor of neurobiology; Zhigang Suo, Puckett professor of mechanics and materials; David R. Williams, Norman professor of public health and professor of African and African American studies; and Amir Yacoby, professor of physics and of applied physics.

**Peak Professors**
The Faculty of Arts and Sciences has conferred Harvard College Professorships—its highest honor for undergraduate teaching and graduate education—on five faculty members; each bears that title for five years, and is awarded extra research support and a semester of paid leave or a summer salary.

**The Reverend Relocates**
Rev. Jonathan L. Walton, Pusey minister in the Memorial Church and Plummer professor of Christian morals since mid 2012, has boomed out his last Commencement benediction: Wake Forest announced in late April that he would become dean of its School of Divinity and Presidential Chair of religion and society, effective July 1.

**Other Teaching Honorands**
Winners of the Roslyn Abramson Award, for outstanding undergraduate teaching, include Ya-chieh Hsu, Star associate professor of stem cell and regenerative biology, and Durba Mitra, assistant professor of studies of women, gender, and sexuality (see Harvard Portrait, September-October 2018, page 17). The Undergraduate Council conferred its Levenson Memorial Teaching Prize on three esteemed instructors (Jais Brohinsky, teaching assistant in education; Andrew W. Murray, Smith professor of molecular genetics; and Daniel Shapiro, associate professor of psychology, Harvard Medical School) and its Marquand Prize for exceptional advising on four counselors (Yanina Barrera, resident tutor in Lowell House; Tytie Coppett, tutor; Maximilian Kasy, associate professor of economics; and Irene Pepperberg, research associate). And the Graduate Student Council weighed in with its Mendelsohn Excellence in Mentoring Award, recognizing six advisers (Finale Doshi-Velez, assistant professor of computer science; Alison Johnson, professor of history and of Germanic languages and literature; Luke Miratrix, assistant professor of education; Venkatesh Murthy, professor of molecular and cellular biology; Jesse Snedeker, professor of psychology; and Gabriela Soto Laveaga, professor of the history of science).

**Prompting Policymaking**
The Harvard Kennedy School has appointed three new faculty directors for the academic...
Domínguez Banned from Campus

Jorge Domínguez—formerly Madero professor for the study of Mexico and Harvard’s initial vice provost for international affairs—who retired last year after being accused of persistent sexual harassment (see harvardmag.com/dominguez-18), has now been stripped of his emeritus status and the privileges associated with it. FAS dean Gay informed the community on May 9 that Harvard’s Title IX investigation into the case, conducted by the Office for Dispute Resolution (ODR), found that Domínguez “engaged in unwelcome sexual conduct toward several individuals, on multiple occasions over a period spanning nearly four decades.”

Under the sanctions she imposed, Domínguez will be disinvited from the FAS campus, and from all FAS-sponsored activities on and off campus. At her request, the University has also disinvited him from the Harvard campus and Harvard-sponsored events. The sanctions mean that Domínguez won’t be allowed to teach classes, have research assistants, access Harvard’s libraries, or have office space and other privileges provided to emeritus professors.

“The ODR findings reveal a longstanding pattern of behavior that, at several points,
Financing the Fencing Coach?

Harvard avoided the taint of the “Varsity Blues” admissions scandal disclosed on March 12—the payments to have students’ standardized tests altered or taken by others, the six- and seven-figure bribes to coaches to designate (nonathletic) applicants as athletic recruits—that swept in institutions such as the University of Southern California, Georgetown, and Yale. But in early April, The Boston Globe reported that Peter Brand, Harvard’s varsity fencing coach since 1999, had engaged in real-estate and nonprofit financial transactions with the parent of a then-fencing recruit, subsequently sold it for a loss of more than $300,000.

Claudine Gay, who as FAS dean oversees Harvard’s athletics program, issued a statement about the allegations against Brand. In a letter to the community, she wrote, “We are now moving quickly to learn more about these claims through an independent review”—which at a minimum would appear to bear on the University’s policies dealing with conflicts of interest.

The investigation was continuing as this issue went to press; for links to the underlying news, see harvardmag.com/fencing-coach-19.

Undergraduate Education Alterations

CONCLUDING much academic business on May 7 at its last regular meeting of the year, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences enacted two significant pieces of legislation affecting undergraduate learning.

After considering the pros and cons of the “shopping week” that begins each semester—enabling undergraduates to sample and choose classes that really appeal to them, and perhaps make important intellectual discoveries, but making it very difficult in some cases to match enrollment with graduate teaching fellows, or even suitable teaching spaces—the faculty voted to retain the current system for three more years. But in the interim, a new faculty committee will attempt to determine whether incremental improvements can be effected. Among them are algorithms and other tools to attempt to predict enrollments better; a common way of handling lotteries for enrollment-limit courses; and, once the graduate-student union contract is settled, taking into account the new terms for employing them as teaching fellows.

In the meantime, the committee will prepare an alternate system, perhaps for some sort of preregistration with an “add/drop” period, so that when the faculty next deliberates, it can compare the current system, as incrementally improved, with some other vision of how to effect enrollment each semester—and choose how to proceed. Read about the background at harvardmag.com/shopping-wk-19 (with links to prior reporting).

Over the strongly held objections of some mathematics professors, who felt that a commitment to instruction in mathematical reasoning and formal logic was being boot from the curriculum without substantive debate (see harvardmag.com/quant-reasoning-req-19), the faculty also legislated the final element of the revised General Education curriculum, which debuts in the fall term. It is the Quantitative Reasoning with Data requirement, to be fulfilled not with purpose-built courses like the rest of Gen Ed, but rather through completion of one of a designated range of courses—deemed to contain sufficient content on “mathematical, statistical, and computational methods”—that will enable the young learners “to think critically about data as it is employed in fields of inquiry” across the FAS.

It is, in effect, a fourth distribution requirement (along with the broad, divisional ones in arts and humanities, social sciences, and science and engineering), albeit somewhat more narrowly constrained (for an overview, read harvardmag.com/qrd-plus-preregistration-19). The dissenting mathematicians did secure an amendment to review the new requirement (its “goals, rationale, and scope within the wider context of the College’s curriculum”) during the 2022-2023 academic year.

And with that, the revised Gen Ed proceeds to the reality test—enrolling students—come summer’s end.

Supporting Public Service

During his inaugural address last October, President Bacow advanced one programmatic proposal: “It is my hope that every Harvard graduate, in every profession, should be an active, enlightened, and engaged citizen. So I am pleased to announce today we will work toward raising the resources so we can guarantee every undergraduate who wants one a public-service internship of some kind…” During the April 27–29 Visitas weekend for students admitted to the class of 2023, College dean Rakesh Khurana unveiled a down payment toward that aspiration, an initiative called the “Service Starts with Summer Program” (3SP).

Its idea is to habilitate students to public service before they matriculate, building on activities many of them may have already pursued while in secondary school, and to introduce them to Harvard’s many public-service resources as early as possible. The initiative invites each student to perform public service in her or his hometown this summer, with up to 100 applicants eligible for a $1,500...
the course’s traditional introduction to economic theory.

Leadership online. Harvard Kennedy School has introduced its “Public Leadership Credential,” a six-unit online program (two segments each in evidence for decisions, leadership and ethics, and policy design and delivery), leading to a credential and, for those so inclined, a possible pathway into the mid-career M.P.A. The credential broadens access to the school’s lecturers and expertise; opens new avenues for revenue; and, like Harvard Business School Online’s foundational offerings, can expand the pool of potential degree-seekers on campus.

Urbanism online. The Graduate School of Design’s “future of the American city” project—conducting research initially in Miami, on subjects ranging from transportation to adapting to climate change—has launched an e-resource (http://fotac.gsd.harvard.edu/) to disseminate its findings.

Miscellany. The Arnold Arboretum has installed a solar array with 450 kilowatts of capacity, and associated storage, to provide up to 30 percent of the energy required to run its Weld Hill Research and Education Building....Rothenberg professor of the humanities Homi K. Bhabha, director of the Mahindra Humanities Center since 2005, concluded his service as of July 1....Harvard University Health Services announced that effective June 17, it will stop providing in-person overnight urgent care; calls for service made between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. will be referred to a nurse advice line, a model it tested beginning last December....Of the 1,950 successful applicants to the College class of 2023 (see Brevia, May-June, page 30), some 83 percent accepted—up 1.3 percentage points from last year; that high yield left only a few spaces open for applicants on the waiting list....Loeb associate professor of engineering and applied sciences Jelani Nelson, an algorithm specialist whose University appointment was widely hailed (Harvard Portrait, May-June 2015, page 19), is departing for a professorship at the University of California, Berkeley.

stipend for completing 100 hours of service. During the summer, they will be in contact with faculty and public-service staff members through webinars, and with Harvard student peers and fellows through summer work. The whole class will then be invited to participate in a pre-orientation day of service in Cambridge, Somerville, or Boston.

Khurana said, “We were inspired by President Bacow’s call for a public-service role for the University,” and sought ways to “infuse our mission” of educating students through transformative experiences “that will prepare them for a life of service and leadership”—in this case, “right from the start” of their undergraduate years.

The program’s origins, details, and role in public-service programming—and pending changes to integrate those activities with students’ academic and curricular work—are detailed at harvardmag.com/service-summer-19.

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THE UNDERGRADUATE

Documentary Styles

by Catherine Zhang ’19

At first, we were geniuses. Eрудite intellectuals with a subtle eye for shifts in mood and a proclivity for name-dropping the film theorist Walter Benjamin. We bandied words like “juxtaposition” and “interiority,” belabored skepticism of documentary’s “objectivity,” and referred to every directorial decision as “interesting...” This was before we’d discover our own footage was shaky, our two-minute sound excerpts full of microphone noises and rustling. Each week we’d watch experimental films from Harvard’s Sensory Ethnography Lab—which The New York Times lauded for producing “some of the most daring and significant documentaries of recent years”—and bask in all of our grand possibilities.

Our first assignment in Visual and Environmental Studies 52 (“Introduction to Nonfiction Videomaking”) was to film a two-minute scene without zooming or cutting. I rented a tripod and Sony Z150 camera from the equipment lab in the basement of Sever and lugged them to the Dudley Co-op, where my friend (and the other current Ledecky Fellow) Isa was in the kitchen chopping broccoli. At first, my hands fumbled while tilting the camera, and I struggled to extend my tripod to the right height. But after some practice, the motions became intuitive. Tucked into a corner, my back pressed against the refrigerator door, I watched life unfurl in front of me: Isa flitting from the spice cabinet to the industrial oven, radiant in her magenta jacket; friends sniffing around for the previous night’s sourdough; the exuberant greetings; the vegetables sizzling; the spontaneous harmony of all these activities occurring at once, so that the kitchen ceased to be a kitchen but became its own little society instead.

“Part of the attraction to film is its affinity with life itself: the movement on the screen evoking the movement we ourselves experience outside the cinema, the seeing evoking our own seeing, and hearing evoking hearing,” my Cross-Cultural Filmmaking handbook had said. What I found engrossing about filming was the ability to communicate how I experienced the world to those outside my walled-off interior space: the humor of plastic bags of pasta hanging over Isa’s head, the politics of care expressed by tattered “Support the Strike” signs. Later, my classmates praised my “intimate framing” of the Co-op and marveled at the poise with which Isa holds herself. I was moved by my sense that they could see in her what I see through the rhythms of our three-and-a-half-year friendship.

Junior year, most of my friends took part in a mass exodus from River Central to the Co-op at 3 Sacramento Street, north of the Yard. Without geographic proximity, our relationships felt tenuous, fastened only by memories of prior happiness. I regularly misinterpreted their introversion as coldness or dislike. So when I normalized...